The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 1919

THE GREAT GAME OF LIFE

This world's a diamond with bases laid,
And on it Life's great game of ball is played;
The teams are Human Beings versus Fate,
And Time's the umpire, watching by the plate;
We're at the bat; our purpose o'er and o'er
To wield ambition's club and try to score;
And try to solve the curves the pitcher throws
And lam the sphere where not a fielder goes;
Where some of us are sluggers who can kill
Fate's binding speed and drive it as we will,
Others tap infield hits, and swiftly race
And beat the ball down to the primal base,
Still others, though they strive their best, no doubt,
Fan wildly at the air and then strike out,
Then seek the bench, downcast, with visage drawn,
Crestfallen, shamefaced, blue, ambition gone!
Or rag the umpire, growling like a bear
To shift the blame and sulk in despair;
That's not the game; there is no time to quit,
What though you failed to cut in with a hit,
You've got another chance—stand to the plate,
Head up and ready—keep your guard and wait,
Wait for a good one—let the other rip,
And when it comes, now—lam it hard and zip!
It's got to go! And so must you, old man!
Hike for the base—keep going, yes you can,
And so around—don't lose that swinging stride;
You've got to beat the throw in—slide now slide,
Wow, Wow! You did it; score; Of course you scored.
Boo—there's your tally marked up on the board!
And now you'll win the game—no doubt at all.
You'll never lose ,old man, if you'll Play Ball!

THE COMING OF SPRING

Spring came to us; we put away winter wear and dressed ourselves for new work and a new gladness.

Spring came to our kitchen; we forestalled the first fly and greeted the warm sunshine with screens and paint and fresh self-paper.

Spring came to our dining room; we moved the table nearer the windows and set our table with the lighter, crisp food for which spring appetites clamor. We dressed our china closet anew and made spring meal times glad meeting times.

Spring came to our bedroom; we renewed bedding and covers; added dainty touches of gaiety and color to dresser and washstand, for we mean to awaken blithely to the call of the new days.

Spring came to our living room; we put away the heavy rugs; used a lot of paint, oil and varnish; gave dusty books and magazines a beating; hardened our hearts to cast out winter's useless accumulations; repotted our plants.

Spring danced all around outside the house; we put up new trellises for old vines and set out new vines for old trellises. The dingy walls laughed in new tints and the buzzing flies bumped in vain against newly repaired and painted screens.

Spring danced on the lawn; we seeded bare spots, raked untidy spots, repaired the fences, rehung the gates.

Spring hid in the flower garden; we uncovered the perennials and set out the annuals and kissed the baby buds on the "haycack" bush.

Spring beckoned to us from the vegetable garden; we sowed and set and raked and made rows, casting up accounts meanwhile, for Spring, the maiden, soon is Autumn, the matron, and there'll be cans to fill and cash to count, if we make our garden according to Maiden Spring's best orders.

Spring came with a rush to bars and stable, coop, corral and pen; we welcomed and housed and cherished every new young life and—

Before we fully knew Spring's glad face, tan-checked Summer was upon us.

WHAT VARIETIES OF GRAIN ARE YOU GROWING?

This is a question that should not be dodged by any farmer. The country is full of varieties about which nothing is known. These varieties have gotten into a district and they find a friend who continues to grow them year after year, occasionally supplying a neighbor with seed. This has occurred in almost every locality unless an active propaganda has introduced modern high yielding sorts. The result in most cases is that these various grains have degenerated and the farmer is losing bushels per acre through the use of obsolete varieties.

This condition is a survival of the days when one could find in any seed catalogue, numerous varieties with names suggestive of big yields and lucrative profits. The travelling agent with his high priced grains who appeared annually with old varieties under a new name shares the guilt of the enterprising seedman.

This multiplicity of varieties, especially of those about which nothing is known, is a serious and unprofitable condition. The remedy is simple. There has just been issued by the Experimental Farms a revised list of recommended varieties for the various provinces of Canada. Only those that have demonstrated their superiority for a number of years are recommended, and without a doubt they are immensely superior to the archaic sorts now being grown in many localities. If you have not already received it, address a letter to the Dominion Cerealist, Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and a copy will be forwarded immediately. The Dominion Cerealist is also glad to assist any person in the procuring of seed of these varieties. Every farmer should, while there is yet time before seeding, consider carefully the sorts of grain that he is now growing, and if in the light of the revised list of recommended varieties, they are weighed in the balance and found wanting, he should take steps immediately to procure fresh seed of standard sorts.—Experimental Farms Note.

WASTED EFFORT

A squad of rookies, composed of various nationalities, mostly Italian, on being given the command "Mark time!" all executed the command with the exception of one small dark skinned son of Naples.

The sergeant asked him why he did not execute the movement and he replied:

"Donna want to."

"Why not?" sharply demanded the sergeant.

"Cause-a we walk-a like deuce and dent-a get-a no place!"—From the Detroit Free Press.

REPAIRING THE MISTAKES OF OTHERS

The most able people in the world spend much of their time and energy repairing the mistakes of others. One of the saddest of wastes is the sacrifice of superior ability to make up for the careless blunders of average people. The worker who does not quite fill his place, whose work has to be watched and corrected, is making it impossible for those above him to make the best use of their time. Do your best where you are, in order that your superiors may do their best where they are.

LARRY'S DIPLOMA

Supper was over in the Sullivan household, but Larry, the father, remained at the table, while his wife and Katie, the oldest girl, washed the dishes at the kitchen sink. It would soon be time to go to his work, for he was a night watchman in a downtown building; but meanwhile he sat drumming absently on the table.

"And how do you fare at the grammar school these days, Katie?" he asked at length.

Katie, bright-eyed and rosy-cheeked, like her father, returned his smile as she polished off a plate with a dexterous flirt of her towel.

"Better, father dear," she replied. "It has been weary work chasing along behind; but I'm gaining, and I'll sure graduate this year. It shall never be said of me that I left off school without a diploma!"

"They might say that same of me," said her father. "I'm wondering," he continued thoughtfully, "if it is too late to get one now. I've half a mind to try."

"What nonsense are you talking of, Larry?" said Mrs. Sullivan. "Would you be going back to the grammar school?"

"I might take private lessons," said Larry.

"And who would be your teacher?"

"Who else but Miss Katie Sullivan? Isn't she smart enough to get a diploma for both of us?"

"It's only a joke, Katie; don't mind him," said the mother, as she packed her husband's midnight luncheon.

But the joke did not stop there. Two months afterward it was the topic of Mrs. Sullivan's talk with her neighbor, as they hung out their respective washings in adjoining yards.

"You'll laugh, Mrs. Malone, when I tell you that my man is studying for a grammar-school diploma. He's got our Katie to teach him, and it's her that's putting him through his paces. He has spare time at night when he isn't making his rounds, and it's then he studies the books she brings home. Then every morning, before he goes to bed, she puts out his spelling lesson, and marks his sums, and hears him recite, and explains, and scolds him for all the world like a real teacher. She does be saying that he picks up the learning fast.

"But how can Larry get a diploma? You may well ask that, Mrs. Malone. It's my belief he can't, though he does say if he goes to the committee and tells them boldly that he's ready to take the final examination that he missed when a boy, how can they have the face to refuse him? But it's fine practice for Katie. She was behind at school from being out so much, by reason of my children always taking any disease that comes near. But now she's near the head of the class, and barring ill luck, she'll easy win her diploma at the end of the year."

But with the goal almost in sight, fate again laid a detaining hand on Katie. There still remained one of childhood's diseases for the young Sullivans to take, and when the quarantine was once more lifted, June was at hand.

"It run light with all but Katie," Mrs. Sullivan told her neighbor. "It has left the poor girl's eyes in that state that she can use them for scarce anything, except to cry with disappointment. It has cheated her out of her diploma entirely. Did you ever hear of the like bad luck? To-day we are packing her off to my brother's farm in the country, and I hope the change will do her good."

The change must have done Katie good, for she came back on the day before school was to close, with eyes much improved, and her health otherwise completely restored.

No traveller returning from foreign parts ever received a warmer welcome than did Katie in that humble home. "Your father can't be disturbed yet," said Mrs. Sullivan, "but I can tell you a bit of news. They have considered your case, and decided that you've earned your diploma; so you are to graduate with the rest. Here is the letter, and isn't the sight of it good for your weak eyes? But Larry will be telling you he's beaten you, for he's got his diploma already."

Katie's joy over her own good fortune was almost lost in her surprise at her father's success; but to all her inquiries her mother would only answer, "You must wait a bit. He'll be wanting to tell you the story himself."

Then Katie had her own long story of her visit to tell, but after a time she stole outdoors to look about her. She was back from broad fields, gay with buttercups and daisies, to a narrow, dusty street, and a bare little yard where flowers could never be made to grow; but this was home and her heart was glad. An ice cart went lumbering by, and she waved her hand at the driver, who lived a few doors below. From down the street the letter carrier was approaching. Glancing in another direction, she caught sight of Policeman Burke just turning the corner. Very imposing he looked; no wonder Mary Burke was proud of him. "But my father is a far finer figure of a man," said Katie to herself, "and wouldn't I like to see him in a uniform once!"

Then she heard a quick step on the walk, and she turned to find her wish gratified. "I have a letter for one Katie Sullivan at this number," said a well-known voice. "Are you the party, miss?"

"Why, father!" cried Katie in amazement, as she threw her arms round his neck. "However did you get to be a letter carrier?"

"It was by means of my diploma," replied Larry, with a grin. "That's the name I give to the paper that came from Washington, showing that I had passed my civil-service examination. It is that I was working for all the while, Katie dear, and never would I have got it without your help. I'm a sub now, and only on this route while Mr. Towle has his vacation; but I'll be on regular soon."

"But why did you keep us so in the dark?" asked Katie reproachfully.

"For the reason that I wouldn't have you sorrowing if I failed. But now you must leave me go. It is strictly against orders to loiter, or needlessly converse with patrons on the route."

"And what is your letter?" asked Mrs. Sullivan, with a smile, as Katie, quite breathless with excitement, entered the house.

"Oh, I never thought to look!" said the girl, as she tore open the envelope. "Why, it's the dearest hair ribbon, an' a card! And, listen, now, to what it says: 'For Miss Katie Sullivan, from her grateful friend, Mr Lawrence Sullivan. Hoping she will wear it at her graduation, and remember the giver when she receives her diploma.'"

MAKE YOUR ANCESTORS PROUD OF YOU

Some young people seem to feel that the family honors have been amply provided for by what their ancestors have done, and are perfectly content to rest upon their oars. But that is a mistaken view to take. If we are fortunate enough to be descended from men and women of force and character and achievement, it is a disgrace to us to be satisfied to wear their laurels. In the shadow of the pyramids Napoleon inspired his soldiers by the thought of the generations that were looking down on them. If we are proud of our ancestors, we should be ambitious to give our ancestors equally good reason for being proud of us.

Better a man who makes a respectable wage than one who merely dreams of millions.

A French inventor is making gas pipes from paper, compressed, dried and varnished.

THE OLD MAN OF THE BIG CLOCK TOWER

A citizen said to me the other day when we were talking of improvements to the appearance of home surroundings which are being made these days, that he felt little inclination to do much about his place when the neighbors chickens and dogs scratch up his garden and run riot over the lawn and flower beds. Now this is too bad. People who keep chickens in town should keep them enclosed and not allow them to annoy the neighbor who takes a pride in the appearance of his home garden. Of course one can, by law, summon the offending neighbors, to court, but this is not desirable, nor should it be necessary. Those who keep chickens and dogs should have some regard for the neighbors who do not. I'd like to have a brood of chickens myself, with Easter eggs at the price asked, but I prefer to have the neighbors on good terms with me.

This week, and especially Friday, Saturday and Sunday, my time was occupied for the most part with watching the Easter doings, visitors, etc. It has kept me busy and guessing too, to place some of the faces that used to be quite familiar around this town of ours. Sometimes I looked twice, and more than once I spoke to people I thought I knew, and found out later they were perfect strangers to me. Of course they were Mr. Blank's boy or they married Miss So and So who used to live here, and I knew their parents in some cases or could trace some sort of acquaintanceship; but it made me feel sort of foolish, and I suppose they thought I was in my dotage. "Friendly, that's me all over." The three holidays were graced with such beautiful, springlike weather that most everyone seemed to be on sightseeing expeditions around town. Then there were all those city visitors, home to show our women folk the latest creations in styles. Just as if they hadn't all been down and seen them months ago. And some of the remarks I overheard about these new creations. They were surely amusing, and I just roared and laughed. I'll just give you a sample or two, but I won't mention any names: "Wasn't that coat Miss —— had on a dream. I bet you that cost something." "Doesn't Miss' —— look a fright in that new suit with the tight fitting skirt," and "Is that so and so's fellow with her, or is he a friend of the family?" and then "How do you like that new dolman Miss —— is wearing." The next time Miss ——, wearing the dolman, came down town I took a side look at her and, bless your heart, if my wife wasn't wearing one of them there things well on to forty years ago. Of course it wasn't just the same kind—that would never do. This dolman they are wearing now is a perfectly new creation. My, how easily some people get fooled. Better save your old clothes ladies. They'll be in again in a decade or two. But I have said enough about Acton's Fifth Avenue parade, and that should not be the leading feature of Easter, although it, and how many eggs you can afford to eat, seems to have gained the predominant place. People seem to have forgotten, in the majority of cases, what this glorious season commemorates.

I believe now that I was a little hasty when I classed the old tannery building and the new shoe factory in the same category a few weeks ago. Activities around the fine brick edifice on Guelph and Church streets the past week seem to warrant the placing of the shoe factory among the real live things in town. The change from the dormant stage was quite welcome, however; and from what I read in the paper last week, and gather from town gossip the concern is down to real business and ready to get settled here, or the building is sure to be occupied by some other prominent manufacturing concern. It doesn't make a great deal of difference who occupies the building so long as they are a good responsible firm and can provide employment for the number of people the shoe factory proposed to do. I am glad to see this fine building lifted out of the "neglected building class" which it appeared to be in when I wrote an essay on it a month or so ago. And I know we will all be delighted to see and hear the hum of industry that will soon be surrounding this new addition to Acton's splendid manufacturing activities.

THE OLD MAN.

P.S.—Will somebody please start something. Pretty soon I'll be run out of material to write upon. Guess I'll be forced to have another dream.

FOREIGN CREDITS FOR THE SALE OF CANADIAN WHEAT

J. A. Maharg, M.P., says that Canada cannot expect to export to the United States wheat of the 1919 crop. The fixed price in that country will keep out the Canadian product, for the Americans would not allow cheaper Canadian wheat to undersell their own, which remains at the 1918 fixed price.

This means that Canada's exportable surplus of wheat must find a market abroad, which further means that it must be sold on time. Mr. Maharg says that many solvent nations want it, but that they cannot pay cash, so if sales are to be made large credits must be granted.

The Dominion Government is willing to grant these credits, but its ability to do so is dependent on the extent to which it can borrow money from its own people. If the money is forthcoming all the credits required will be granted, but Canadians must make these possible. For Canada to borrow money abroad for this purpose would be out of the question.

War Savings Stamps help solve the problem of credits, for they enable the Government to borrow at home the money it requires. Besides, the price of the stamps is placed so low, $4, that every person earning wages in Canada can afford to buy them. The farmers of the West should be eager to get them, for they are vitally interested in seeing that foreign credits are granted.

THE ACCUMULATION OF OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities are not "used" up. They "pile" up. They accumulate. The workers from the beginning have been making chances for you to utilize. The young man of to-day has openings into lines of activity which were unknown in his father's boyhood. Instead of talking as if the generations back of you had used up all the opportunities, thank them for the stores of opportunities they have accumulated for your sake.

SECRET OF THE FLASH LIGHT

A pocket flash light is the handiest little device ever perfected for use about the home during the night. It saves all the bother of striking matches, of lighting lanterns and the carrying of lights when one wants to look into dark places.

There is no mystery about the handy little flash light, in spite of the fact that it can be carried around for weeks and yet is ever ready to give a beam of brilliant light on demand whenever the tiny switch is manipulated. This beam of light can be thrown into the most impossible places, from almost any position. The flash light is an electric light. It differs in no way from the other electric lights in your home, except that it is smaller. The minature lamp on the end of the flash light is a perfect lamp, consisting of a fine filament of tungsten wire enclosed in a glass vacuum bulb no larger than the end of one's finger. Wires lead the current into this lamp through the base and stem to the filament. The lamp screws into its socket and can be easily renewed at a trifling cost when it is burned out, like any other electric lamp.

The electricity for the flash light is produced by two small chemical batteries concealed within the handle, or body of the device. These batteries are made to conform to the shape of the handle. Each battery consists of three elements, a zinc plate, a carbon plate, and the electrolyte, or chemical. The electrolyte is in the form of a paste surrounding both the zinc and the carbon. When the light is not in use, the spring device of the push button keeps the circuit open and the battery produces no electricity. The instant the circuit is completed by pressure on the button the chemical compound begins to act on the zinc, in a form of combination. As the zinc is consumed by the chemical, electricity is produced. This electricity flows out over the electrical circuit, consisting of tiny wires concealed within the device, to the electric lamp, and causes it to glow and produce light. The light is reflected out into a straight beam from a small reflector affixed behind the little lamp.

ENOUGH TO SHARE

A selfish man, still healthy and strong, announced his intention of giving up his work and living at his ease. "I have put by sufficient to care for me the rest of my life," he said, "and I think that is enough." The clergyman to whom he made this statement, shook his head. "You are mistaken there," he said. "My friend, you should put by enough to care for somebody else."

Our resources are inadequate unless we have enough to share with other people. A great many of us lead such sheltered, care-free lives that it would be easy to look out for our own needs. But if we stop there, we fail. We should have good cheer to spare for the despondent. We should have strength for the weak and the tempted. To love beauty and order, to live at peace is sufficient unless we are teaching the secret of peace and beauty to someone else. Estimate your resources not by your own need, but by the needs of the brother whose hands and heart are empty.

"FIRST TO LAST—THE NEWS"

Has Anyone

Died
Eloped
Married
Left town
Embezzled
Had a fire
Had a baby
Broke a leg
Had a party
Sold a farm
Had twins, or
Struck it rich
Been arrested
Come to town
Bought a home
Stole a cow, or
The neighbor's wife
Committed suicide
Bought an automobile
Fallen from an airplane
Run away with a handsomer man?
That's news. Phone 11a or 11b and we will publish it.

MORE THAN SHE BARGAINED FOR

There is an amusing example of the ambiguities that lie hidden in our English tongue in the following story that we found in a recent newspaper. A lady, according to the narrator, wrote to an army officer at Fort Sam Houston as follows: "Mrs. Smythe requests the pleasure of Capt. Bunker's company at a dinner on July 17, at seven o'clock."

The next day she received this note: "With the exception of three men who have the measles and one who is in the guard house, Capt. Bunker's company accepts Mrs. Smythe's kind invitation with pleasure."

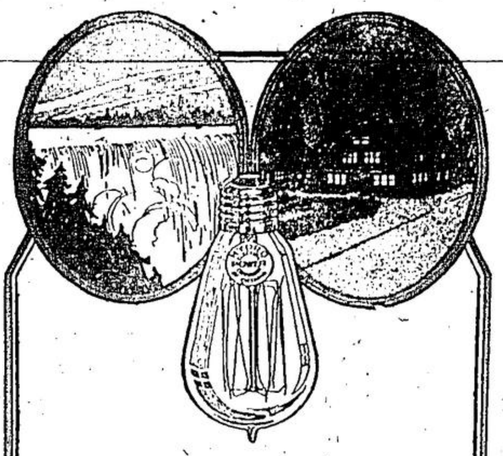
PREVENTION AND CURE

Jenkins lived in a flat, and the man below was learning to play the trombone.

He was surprised and a little flattered when Jenkins came down to borrow the instrument. He lent it willingly, and told Jenkins he could have it any time he wanted it. Jenkins took full advantage of the offer. He was always borrowing that trombone.

"What do you borrow it for?" asked Jenkins' wife. "You can't play it."

"I know," said Jenkins cheerfully. "Nor can the fellow downstairs while I've got it."



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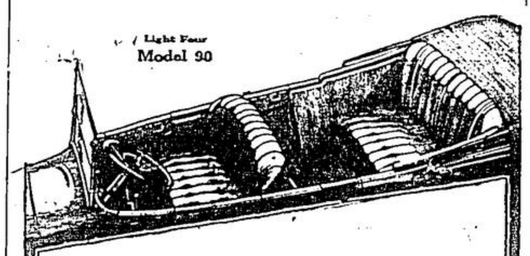
Overland



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33